

Fishtrap United Baptist Church
Fishtrap Vicinity
Johnson County
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-135

HABS,
KY.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. KY-135

FISHTRAP UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH

Location: Near Paint Creek, between Blanton and Colvin Branches, Fishtrap vicinity, Johnson County, Kentucky.

USGS Oil Spring Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17.332891.419506.

Present Owner: United States Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, P. O. Box 2127, Huntington, West Virginia 25721 (1976).

Present Occupant: Fishtrap United Baptist Church.

Present Use: Religious Services. The church is to be relocated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, in order to protect it from flooding due to the construction of a dam and reservoir by impounding Paint Creek. The church will be moved to Federal property on the Colvin Branch.

Significance: Fishtrap United Baptist Church, built 1843, was among the earliest log churches in Johnson County (Hall, Johnson County, page 292). Covered with weatherboard in the late 19th century, the church is notable for its simplicity and fine interior woodwork.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. History of Structure:

The Union Association of United Baptists in Kentucky was organized in October 1837 by Elders William Wells, Wallace Bailey, Elijah Prater and John Borders. In 1840 they became aware that there was another Union Association of United Baptists in Kentucky and added Paint (as they were near Paint Creek) to their name to differentiate between the two groups.

The church bought land for a building from Alexander Pelphrey on June 13, 1843 for \$1.50. The church, built circa 1843, was of hewn logs. Local sources indicate that each member of the congregation was obliged to furnish a log or logs for the construction of the church. The first minister of the church was Reverend James Pelphrey. The structure was covered with weatherboard and a tin roof during the late nineteenth century.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Washington, D.C. National Register of Historic Places.
Determination of Eligibility Fishtrap United Baptist
Church. (by Robert Maslowski, 1976).

Rahenkamp, Sachs, Wells and Associates. Paintsville Lake,
Environmental Assessment. Huntington: United States
Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, 1975.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Hall, Mitchell. Johnson County, Kentucky. Volume 1.
Louisville: The Standard Press, 1928.

Prepared by Mary Beth Betts
Historic American
Buildings Survey
April 1979
from research compiled by
Robert Maslowski
Archeologist
United States Army Corps
of Engineers, Huntington
District
April 21, 1976

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The church is a one story, rectangular, 30' 5" (three bay front) x 40' 5" building. It has two shuttered windows on each elevation, and a double door on the northwest (front) elevation, with a concrete porch. The gable roof is covered with tin and there is a red brick chimney. The thickness of the walls suggests that the structure was built of half timbers six to seven inches thick. It is now covered with weatherboard. The church sits up off of the ground on hand-cut sandstone pedestals, some of which have been placed on concrete slabs. Hand-hewn poplar beams are set directly on the pedestals. The exterior floor is made of sawmill lumber.

On the interior the church is a large room with a pulpit at the southwest end and wooden pews. The floor is covered with finished soft woods. The height of the room from floor to ceiling is 11'. The structure formerly heated with a potbellied stove and lighted with kerosene lanterns and lamps, is now heated by a centrally located floor furnace and a gas furnace located in the northeast corner.

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The building is situated on a terrace on the north side of Paint Creek. It is bordered by Paint Creek on the southwest and sandstone cliffs on the northeast.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Corps of Engineers, Huntington District in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the construction of Paintsville Dam and Reservoir. John A. Burns, AIA was the HABS project coordinator. The historical and architectural written data was prepared in the HABS office by Mary Beth Betts in April 1979, from research compiled by Robert Maslowski, Archeologist, United States Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, August 21, 1976. Photographs were taken by Ted Hegcock in June 1978.